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One Algerian Lesson Kennedy Can Learn From de Gaulle While There's Still Time

When Brass Hats Begin to Read Mao Tse-tung, Beware!

The most important lesson for Washington in the recently attempted Army revolt in Algeria has gone unnoticed in the American press. Yet that lesson could hardly be more timely. The core of the revolt lay in a strange group of offbeat Colonels. These are the Colonels who started the fad for reading Mao Tse-tung and the emphasis, suddenly fashionable in Washington, on using "para-military", "guerrilla" and "revolutionary war" tactics against the Communists. This is the same group of Colonels who helped bring de Gaulle to power in 1958 and whom he began quietly transferring out of Algeria as soon as he could. The lesson de Gaulle understood but Kennedy hasn't yet grasped is that when military men read Mao (and Che Guevara) and seek to turn their tactics to counter-revolutionary purposes, they also turn, often without knowing it, into Communists-in-reverse, i.e. to put it bluntly, into Fascists. And sooner or later they will be tempted to use at home, against their own people and government, the psychological warfare, the brain-washings, the cloak-and-dagger methods and the "dirty tricks" they are allowed to utilize in colonial areas.

Wanted—A Docile Population

The distinguished journalist and historian, Alexander Werth, in his book "The De Gaulle Revolution" which has just appeared in England, describes this group and its origins in a passage which sounds like a preview of military ideas now bubbling in the Pentagon. "Ever since returning from Indo-China, and particularly in 1957-58," Mr. Werth writes, "it was fascinating among French officers in Algeria to talk about Mao-Tse-tung, and about the primary importance in modern warfare of 'psychological action'." Then he goes on to describe the next stage, which we have not yet reached publicly. "This psychological action," Mr. Werth continues, "was primarily to be applied to the 'natives', and to colonial peoples in revolt; but gradually the idea also gained ground that a parallel psychological action could be exercised on the French in Algeria, and ultimately on France itself." Mr. Werth quotes one of this group, the notorious Col. Trinquier, a veteran of Indochina, who recently tried to join the foreign mercenaries in Katanga, as telling a newspaperman in Algeria in 1958, "What we have to do is to organize the population from top to bottom. I don't care if you call me a Fascist; but we must have a docile population, every gesture of which shall be subject to our control."

The traditional American principle of subordinating the military to civilian control takes on new meaning when seen against the background of the putsch these Colonels staged to put de Gaulle into power in 1958 and to replace him with a military dictatorship a few weeks ago. This background also lends heightened significance to a passage in an anonymous report on "Special Warfare" which Lt. Gen. Arthur G. Trudeau, the Army's research and development chief, has been circulating among senior officers at the Pentagon. The document leaked to the *Army Navy Air Force Journal* which published the full text April 8. "The U.S. still maintains a wall of separation between politics and the military," said this anonymous military expert. "This is fine for our domestic problems, but it does not work against communist-supported guerrillas where political and military action are one." But if you use cloak-and-dagger forces abroad on the assumption that you are dealing with a vast Communist conspiracy, how prevent these methods from being used against suspected radicals at home? To break down the wall between politics and the military, to invite the military into the sphere of politics is to undermine the Republic. France learned that lesson again a few weeks ago. We should benefit from it while there is still time.

We Find Ourselves in Good Company

"It was not the enemy, it was our own people, this story [that Havana had been bombed by Cuban defectors] was intended to deceive. Was it in the national interest to let the government deceive the American people?"

—"When the Government Lies, Must the Press Fib?", I. F. Stone's Weekly May 8.

"The Cuban tragedy has raised a domestic issue that is likely to come up again and again . . . is a democratic government in an open society such as ours ever justified in deceiving its own people? . . . Neither prudence nor ethics can justify any administration in telling the public things that are not so."

—"The Right Not to Be Lied To", lead editorial in The New York Times, May 10.

". . . the press was debased [by the CIA in the Cuban affair] for the government's purpose . . . the American people were the only ones to be fooled. . . ."

—James Reston from Washington—"The President and The Press," New York Times, May 10.

The Danger in The Foreign Legions

There is a close corollary of this proposition. Jean Planchais in *Le Monde* (April 24) discussing the different ideological currents in the Algerian military rebellion, noted two points of danger. One was the Colonels, who had drawn from their Indochinese contacts with Marxism fuzzy ideas about regenerating their homeland with a "national socialist"

(Continued on Page Four)

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Documentary: We Want to Help the Peon Without Hurting His Feudal Landlords

The Contradictions in Our Feeble Land Reform Program for Latin America

Mr. [Lincoln] GORDON [consultant, President's task force on Latin America, Dept. of State]: In general . . . the rate of economic growth in Latin America, especially up until 2 or 3 years ago, was not bad. The bad thing has not been so much the general rate of growth as it has been the way in which it has been distributed. It has been very lop-sided and it has not helped the people in the countryside.

Mr. [Otto E.] PASSMAN [D. La., Chrm. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Aid]: Whom do we blame for that?

Mr. GORDON: I think the blame has to be put on the economic and social structure of the countries. That is what the present program is designed to work out.

—Newly released House Appropriations hearings on Latin American aid, the "Alianza para progreso", p. 119.

The biggest obstacle in most Latin American countries to a change in economic and social structure is the power of the great landowners. Until this power is broken, little social reform can be effected. Yet as the reader can see from the next excerpt we hope to bring about agrarian reform without breaking up the big estates on which the power of this feudalistic ruling class rests:

Mr. [Hugh] ALEXANDER [D. N.C.]: Doctor, how many of the agricultural projects contained in your justification [i.e. of the appropriations asked] will result in a breakup of vast estates of the present landowners of Latin America?

Mr. GORDON: Most of these, as I recall, Mr. Alexander, which involve land resettlement, are for settlement in open lands which, in some cases, are already held by public authorities.

Mr. ALEXANDER: The Government?

Mr. GORDON: That is, Government authorities. In some cases, they are open lands which the Government is buying up from private owners under a land reform program. The breaking up by expropriation is a very drastic type of land reform and in general I think we would hope that the necessary changes in land tenure could be brought about by less drastic means than that, of which the tax means is one of the most effective. The essence of this reform in the State of Sao Paolo [Brazil] is a progressive tax on landholdings on which the rate increases as the size of the holding gets larger. In the case of a large estate, the demonstration, if it can be made, that this land is really being utilized to the greatest effectiveness, then a portion of the extra tax is remitted. This is designed to encourage the sale of unused land because the man does not want to pay taxes on it if he is not getting anything out of it. It is designed to encourage the better use of land if the landowner wants to hold on to it. I would say that in most cases this is the type of land reform which we would like to encourage.

—Same, Pps. 204-5.

To leave the great estates alone or subject them to the slow processes of reduction by tax reform means to fall back on public domain lands. This is costly. These lands are mostly covered by forest or jungle. In Peru there is much jungle land east of the Andes not hitherto accessible from the west coast. A vivid picture of this public domain was provided by Mr. Gordon in answer to a question from Mr. Passman:

Mr. GORDON: Mr. Chairman, let me give you an example. In the case of Colombia, there is a fair amount of public domain land and where the kind of project under consideration involves assistance in the construction of access roads. This is inaccessible land at the present time and where stuff has to be carried on men's backs to get it to market.

—Same, Page 114.

While our Southern Democrats feel a natural sympathy for the large plantation owners, they are also worried about competition from them in some of their own export crops like cotton. Thus after testimony showed that Latin America was an area of food shortages despite its agricultural character, the following colloquy occurred:

Mr. [George W.] ANDREWS [D. Ala.]: Why don't they grow food crops rather than cotton?

Mr. [A. A.] BERLE [Chairman, President's Task Force on Latin America]: One of the reasons is precisely the difficulties we have had with the land reform program. For a plantation owner, it is always more advantageous to cultivate a lot of cotton and sell it for what he can get. He will take the cash crop. The peon, or the little farmer on the land, is employed during the cultivating season, otherwise he does the best he can and gets nothing out of it.

—Same, p. 87.

Dr. Berle had just finished testifying that "In Latin America the population has been growing faster than the food supply." If food supply is to catch up with population, in an area where the peons are illiterate, both human and natural resources must be organized by large scale collective farming methods under government direction. But this, too, goes against the grain of our own conditioned thinking, as can be seen from this revealing colloquy:

Mr. [John J.] RHODES [R. Ariz.]: Throughout the statements there has been mentioned the term "land reform" from time to time. Will the ultimate result of land reform, in any case that you know of, be that the government of the country will own more land than it now owns?

Mr. GORDON: I would think not in the end result. The normal situation where the government is buying up land from private holders is that it makes available to small farmers on something like the Homestead Act type of procedure, so that in due course the small farmer gets a freehold title.

Mr. RHODES: Is it our intention that the government not acquire land for the purpose of becoming a large landholder but that it acquire land, if it does acquire it, for the purpose of dividing the land into economic tracts so that an average farm family can make a living?

Mr. GORDON: This is the whole concept of the land reform idea. . . .

Mr. RHODES: I think you see my point. I do not want a lot of collective or state farms in South America or anywhere else so far as that is concerned.

Mr. GORDON: I am completely in accord with that, Mr. Rhodes.

—Same, Page 237.

The family farm is having a hard enough time surviving in the United States. It is hardly a viable solution for illiterate peons in newly opened distant jungles, much less for hungry Latin America's food shortages.

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Documentary: Lincoln White Dims His Lustre As An Authority on Marxism

How the State Dept.'s Spokesman "Declared" Cuba A Member of the Soviet Bloc

Lincoln White, official spokesman of the State Dept., was ragged by the press corps May 2 when he issued a statement saying that Castro's declaration of a Socialist Cuba meant he had joined the Soviet bloc. In equating Socialism with Communism, Mr. White quoted from a letter by Jose Marti, Cuba's leader in the war against Spain, opposing Socialism, apparently unaware that Marti wrote this almost a quarter century before the appearance of the Communist movement. For good measure, Mr. White also compared Castro to Hitler and Mussolini. From the official transcript we present these excerpts for the edification of our readers:

Q. Link, since you distinguish between Communism and genuine Socialism, was Marti referring to genuine Socialism or was he referring to Communism when he made this statement?

Mr. WHITE: I don't know.

Q. When did he make this statement?

Mr. WHITE: Somebody will run that down for you.

Q. Link, do we regard Cuba now as being a member of the Soviet bloc?

Mr. WHITE: I don't think it makes much difference how we regard it. Castro certainly does. He said as much. . . .

Q. Link, I didn't see in all this any distinction between Socialism, as the term was used there by Marti, and your statement, from any other type of Socialism. Do you make this distinction here?

Mr. WHITE: I repeat to you what I said he said and let it stand at that.

A Sweeping Indictment of Socialism

Q. I don't know what is so amusing about this, but this is a very sweeping indictment of Socialism in general which is practiced by some of the people that we don't normally indict. I am wondering whether there is any chance of getting clarification on that before the protests start coming back in. . . . Are you saying that you are not making any distinction between Socialism as you—

Mr. WHITE: *I am quoting what José Marti said.*

Q. Are you quoting with approval?

Mr. WHITE: This is the George Washington of Cuba. This is what he said. I am relating it to the Cuban situation.

Q. But this George Washington we refused to recognize or give any help to for years, Link, and it would be interesting to know what kind of Socialism we are referring to, and what he was referring to.

Mr. WHITE: Let us get the specific reference, and you can read it in full context. [The quotation turned out to be from a letter by Marti to Fermin Valdez Dominguez, referring to Marxism. This was in May, 1849.]

Q. When you bring in this comparison with Hitler and Mussolini, are we also saying this country [Cuba] is Fascist as well as Communist?

Q. [From another reporter.] What is the difference?

Mr. WHITE: Exactly. The question is—

Q. You say there is no difference?

Mr. WHITE: A little different approach; the objective is the same. . . .

Q. Link, in this connection, do we have anything to say about Castro winning the so-called Lenin Prize?

Mr. WHITE: Let facts speak for themselves.

Q. To shorten this whole thing out, when Castro uses the word Socialist, it is the American view that you can substitute the word Communist.

Mr. WHITE: Exactly; certainly.

A Question Never Clearly Answered

Q. Well, one more question. Are you saying in this statement that Castro has become a Soviet satellite in some degree subservient to directions from Moscow?

Mr. WHITE: John [Hightower], I don't know how many times we have pointed out that the motivations of the Castro people in this Sierra Maestra for the betterment of the individual was applauded and accepted by practically everyone in this Hemisphere. It is the subversion, the taking over of those motives by extraterritorial motives, procedures, and so on, that makes the basic difference between the Castro revolution of today.

Q. Well, that is the reason I ask the question. How far has it gone? That is what I am trying to find out.

Mr. WHITE: Just read Mr. Castro's speech and you will see how far he has gone.

Q. A lot of people, interpreting this speech, as I gather in comments made for public consumption earlier today, are *a little unclear on just how far he has gone.*

Mr. WHITE: People who advise me are not unclear in any way about it.

Q. Is Cuba, under Castro, a satellite of the Soviet government?

Mr. WHITE: It certainly has become a member of the bloc, John [Hightower].

Q. Link, a moment ago you said extraterritorial. You meant extracontinental.

Mr. WHITE: That is right, extracontinental.

Soviet Diplomats in Washington Not As Sure As State Dept. Castro Is Now Communist

"Fidel Castro may have proclaimed his Cuban regime to be 'socialist' but the Soviet Union is by no means taking him at his word, much less agreeing with the official U.S. view that Cuba is now in the Communist bloc . . . a sampling of Soviet diplomats here in Washington shows that Castro has got to go a lot further before he rates as a member of the Communist club. . . . Soviet diplomats here point out that he has yet to nationalize all private property or to organize agriculture into collective farms. Nor, most important, has he yet created a 'classless society' of the Cuban population.

"The U.S. has said that Castro has taken Cuba into the Communist bloc. But the Soviet diplomats, asked if Castro might indeed be taken into the Warsaw Pact, respond with a loud 'no.' In the first place, they explain, the Warsaw Pact is a military alliance of the European Communist regimes and Castro is not in Europe. And secondly, as one frankly put it, 'why antagonize the U.S.?'"

—Chalmers Roberts (one of the most persistent questioners in the transcript above) in the Washington Post May 8

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British Expert Sees "Comic Strip View of History" in This Military Ideology

(Continued from Page One)

and "national communist" revolution which recalls the National Socialism of Hitler. The other was the extent to which they leaned for support not only on special cadres of professional soldiers and elite elements, like the parachutists, but on Foreign Legion units largely composed of Germans. We are recruiting similar adventurers from Central and Eastern Europe for service in the so-called Special Warfare units. They seem to come chiefly from right-wing elements. I was told that there were many former *Chetniks* among them; these were the Royal Yugoslav partisans under Mihailovitch, who collaborated during certain periods with the Nazis. The anonymous memorandum in the *Army Navy Air Force Journal* ends by saying "the two names . . . who are most mentionable in this field are Colonel Ed Lansdale, OSO, and Slavko N. Bjelajac, Special Warfare." When I reached Mr. Bjelajac by phone at the Pentagon, he admitted he had served with the Yugoslav Partisan forces under Mihailovitch.*

The Birch Society Mentality

It is no wonder the revolting French officers thought they had American sympathizers. I found at the Pentagon that ACSI (Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence) had translated and circulated widely among senior officers the leading "ideological" work of these French Colonels. This was put together by a Colonel Lacheroy under the pen name of Ximenès in a special double issue (Feb.-Mar. 1957) of the *Revue Militaire d'Information*. Mr. Werth calls it "amateurish and even childish in its starry-eyed discovery of the 'revolutionary war tactics' of Bolshevism," but it seems to have been regarded as hot stuff indeed at the Pentagon where it fit neatly into the Birch Society style views all too prevalent among some officers. A British writer who served in American Combat Intelligence during the last war criticized these French military ideologists for a "comic strip concept of history" which tended to see a Communist plot behind all colonial insurrectionist movements, whether left or nationalist. (Paret: The French Army and *La Guerre Revolutionnaire*, Journal of the Royal United Service Institution, Feb. 1959, reprinted by the British Institute for Strategic Studies in the March-April, 1959, issue of its organ, *Survival*.) The Steve Canyon comic strip mentality is even stronger at the Pentagon.

(More Next Week)

*** It is interesting to notice that the Cuban exiles who told Sam Pope Brewer (New York Times, May 7) that they had been imprisoned and mistreated for objecting to the presence of Batista men in the Guatemalan training camps, described some of the supposed CIA men in charge as speaking English with an accent, "perhaps of Central European origin."**

Open Letter to the President

". . . We are opposed to any further intervention in Cuba, direct or indirect. . . . Any transformation of the present Cuban regime must be the work of the Cuban people themselves. . . . The most basic issue is not the misplanning and incompetence of the CIA. . . . There are not guns enough and planes enough to keep Communism out of Latin America. . . . The only real defense is an offensive for social justice. . . . We believe that the Cuban revolution has turned upon its original democratic aims. . . . But we also believe that the U.S. must bear part of the responsibility for this tragic development. . . . From the present debacle we must derive new wisdom. . . . Let this nation now declare that it will not launch or direct any military attack upon Cuba. . . ."

—From a letter to President Kennedy May 4 initiated by Norman Thomas and also signed by Lionel Abel, James Baldwin, Roger Baldwin, Dr. John Bennett, Eric Bentley, Leroy Bowman, Van Wyck Brooks, Robert Delson, Mark Van Doren, Rev. John La Farge, Patrick Gorman, Prof. Manuel Gottlieb, Rev. Donald Harrington, Robert Heilbroner, Nat Hentoff, John Haynes Holmes, Rabbi Isidore Hoffman, Darlington Hoopes, H. Stuart Hughes, George K. Hunton, Robert M. Hutchins, Murray Kempton, Wm. Kemsley, Seymour Martin Lipset, Lenore Marshall, Emil Mazey, Stewart Meacham, H. L. Mitchell, A. J. Muste, Clarence Pickett, Norman Podhoretz, Charles Price, Philip Rahv, A. Philip Randolph, Dr. David Riesman, Prof. David Spitz, Irwin Suall, Mark Starr, I. F. Stone, Walter Uphoff, Dan Wakefield, Edmund Wilson, Elena Wilson, Frank P. Zeidler.

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